

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 624  
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Health & Human Services  
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Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Currently, under the Texas Health and Safety Code, there is no explicit statutory authority allowing a fire fighter to transport a sick or injured patient in their fire truck when an ambulance is unable to do so.

The purpose of H.B. 624 is to allow fire fighters to transport sick or injured patients to the hospital during emergencies in which an ambulance is unable to transport the patient in a timely manner. Fire fighters may use their fire trucks to transport injured patients when an ambulance is unable to do so.

H.B. 624 allows fire fighters to transport a sick or injured patient to a health care facility in a vehicle other than an emergency vehicle, provided that the appropriate medical service provider (1) is notified of the patient's condition and (2) is unable to provide emergency medical services at the patient's location. Further, the bill requires that medical treatment and transport protocols for the patient's apparent clinical condition authorize the transport of the patient in a vehicle other than an emergency medical services vehicle.

By requiring notification and communication with the healthcare services provider prior to the transportation of the patient, H.B. 624 provides safeguards against improper or dangerous transportation of a patient whose condition precludes safe transportation in a vehicle other than an emergency services vehicle.

H.B. 624 amends current law relating to emergency medical transport by fire fighters of certain patients.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 773, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 773.0043, as follows:

Sec. 773.0043. FIRE FIGHTER EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN PATIENTS; MEDICAL TREATMENT AND TRANSPORT OPERATING GUIDELINES. (a) Defines "fire fighter."

(b) Authorizes a fire fighter, regardless of whether the fire fighter is licensed as an emergency medical services provider, to transport a sick or injured patient to a health care facility in a vehicle other than an emergency medical services vehicle, notwithstanding Section 773.041 (License or Certificate Required), if:

(1) the appropriate emergency medical services provider:

(A) is notified of the patient's clinical condition; and

(B) is unable to provide emergency medical services imminently at the patient's location; and

(2) the medical treatment and transport operating guidelines for the patient's apparent clinical condition authorize transport of the patient in a vehicle other than an emergency medical services vehicle.

(c) Requires each trauma service area regional advisory council to develop the medical treatment and transport operating guidelines necessary to implement this section for the area served by the council and provide notice of the guidelines to the emergency medical services providers and fire fighters in that area.

SECTION 2. Requires each trauma service area regional advisory council, not later than January 1, 2024, to develop medical treatment and transport operating guidelines necessary to implement Section 773.0043, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, and provide notice of the guidelines to the emergency medical services providers and fire fighters in the area.

SECTION 3. Makes application of Section 773.0043, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, prospective to January 1, 2024.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2023.